

China's budget deficit biggest in 60 years

The Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has warned that 2009 will be the most difficult year in the new century. To counter the challenges brought about by the global financial crisis, he has announced the biggest budget deficit in 60 years. Shirong Chen reports from Beijing:

In his lengthy speech, the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao, said China **was faced with unprecedented** difficulties and challenges. He said growth would be much slower, at around 8%, and there would be fewer jobs for graduates and **migrant workers**. The government's no longer confident that its **GDP** target will be met at the end of the year.

As the economy slows down, the government is promising to create nine million new jobs, two million fewer than last year. **To counter the trend**, the government's encouraging companies **to keep staff on** and has **unveiled** a budget **deficit** of 140bn US dollars, the biggest **deficit** since the Communist Party took power 60 years ago.

But there is no promise of extra money, apart from the already much publicised **stimulus package** of nearly 600bn US dollars. Chinese stock markets **nosedived** after his speech.

Shirong Chen, BBC News, Beijing

Vocabulary and definitions

was faced with	experienced, felt
unprecedented	if something is unprecedented, it has never happened before
migrant workers	people who come to areas where there are many jobs (usually big cities) because they couldn't find a job where they originally come from
GDP	short for Gross Domestic Product - the total value of goods and services produced by a country in a year
To counter the trend	in order to change the way in which the situation seems to be developing
to keep staff on	not to sack employees, to continue to employ them
unveiled	announced, made publicly known
deficit	the amount by which money spent is more than money received
stimulus package	a large amount of money specifically allocated to boost, or revive the economy
nosedived	sharply fell/decreased in value

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